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Revision: 2

MILWAUKEE COUNTY EMS PRACTICAL SKILL PERICARDIOCENTESIS

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Signature:	
Page 1 of 1	

Purpose:		Indications:	
To remove blood or fluid from the pericardial sac		Pulseless, apneic patients with signs/symptoms of pericardial tamponade	
Advantages:	Complications:		Contraindications:
Removes blood or fluid from the pericardial sac	Damage to the left ant Pneumothorax Laceration of myocard	erior descending coronary artery ium	Any patient with pulses

Confirm order with medical control

Locate landmark for subdiaphragmatic approach: angle between xiphoid and cartilage of the 7th rib to the left of xiphoid

Cleanse area with alcohol

Insert needle at landmark at 45 degree angle to thorax in direction of patient's left shoulder

Maintain traction on plunger of syringe as needle is advanced to create a vacuum in barrel of syringe

Stop advancement of needle when blood/fluid appears in syringe

Withdraw approximately 50 ml blood/ fluid

Withdraw needle at same angle it was inserted

Save any aspirated material

Dispose of contaminated materials in appropriate receptacle

Reassess patient for signs of improvement

NOTES:

 Signs/symptoms of pericardial tamponade are: hypotension, tachycardia, distended neck veins, narrow pulse pressure, lack of pulses with CPR.